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ARTICLE III.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

BY THE EDITOR.

The Elements of Moral Science. By Francis Wayland, D. D.,
President of Brown University, and Professor of Moral Philo-
sophy. New York, Cooke & Co. pp. 448, 8vo.

A text book on Moral Philosophy may be regarded as a fountain, sending forth either sweet waters or bitter. It is the source whence those who exert a controlling influence over the religious and civil institutions of society, derive many of their principles. It is, or ought to be, a classification of the first principles of Religion and Morality as derived both from Revelation and from Nature. The business of the Moral Philosopher, as it seems to us, is, to consider the rules gathered from the light of nature and those revealed in the Scriptures, *together*, to examine them with reference to the nature of Him who gave them, and of man who is to be governed by them, and hence to deduce their application to human conduct. It is unnecessary to say that the examination of these rules in this manner, and the deduction of their application to human conduct under different circumstances, is a work of the very first importance. A work from which the public teachers of religion, and the framers of the laws, and the interpreters of justice, derive their notions of the philosophy of morals—who does not perceive the immense influence it must exert upon all the intercourse of men with each other, and upon all the institutions of society? We by no means suppose that any work on Moral Philosophy will be adopted by all men, in all its parts, as the true system of morals. There are men who think for themselves—who are slow to take any thing on trust, but they are a very small number. AUTHORITY rules the mass of mankind, and a great many who suppose themselves very far removed from its influence. Even those who think for themselves, derive the ground work of their opinions, insensibly, from the first books put into their hands, or if not, these books give a coloring to their mode of thinking which endures throughout life.

The distinguished author of the work in question, seems to have considered the science of Moral Philosophy in the manner which we have indicated. He has regarded both the express will of God as announced in the Scriptures, and his will as more indirectly intimated by the nature of man whom he has created. It does not, however, fall within the scope of our design to give an analysis of the work. Our object in this notice, is to introduce to

the attention of our readers that part of the work which relates directly to the objects of this journal—the Chapter entitled “*Benevolence toward the Injurious.*” That our readers who may not happen to see the work itself, (which by the way, we would recommend to them to see,) may be in possession of the entire argument, we shall give the entire chapter. We will, however, first premise that the doctrines contained in it on the subject of War are very different from those of Dr. Paley, whose work on Moral Philosophy has been the text book, generally studied in our colleges and higher schools. Says Paley,—

“War may be considered with a view to its causes and its conduct.

The *justifying* causes of war are, deliberate invasions of right, and the necessity of maintaining such a balance of power among neighboring nations, as that no single state, or confederacy of states, be strong enough to overwhelm the rest. The objects of just war, are precaution, defence, or reparation. In a larger sense, every just war is a *defensive* war, inasmuch as every just war supposes an injury perpetrated, attempted, or feared.

The *insufficient* causes or *unjustifiable* motives of war, are the family alliances, the personal friendships, or the personal quarrels of princes ; the internal disputes which are carried on in other nations ; the justice of other wars ; the extension of territory or of trade ; the misfortunes or accidental weakness of a neighboring or rival nation.”

This writer who maintains doctrines of such latitude as that the necessity of maintaining the balance of power, and the *fear* of injury, are just causes of war, let it be remembered, quotes in his preface, and with approbation, the following words of Dr. Johnson. “When the obligations of morality are taught, let the sanctions of Christianity never be forgotten : by which it will be shown that they give strength and lustre to each other : religion will appear to be the voice of reason, and morality will be the will of God.”

President Wayland comes to the conclusion that *all* war is *wrong*. He proceeds on the ground that all war is a returning of evil for evil, which is expressly forbidden by the Gospel. He recognizes no analogy between it and judicial punishment. Now it is asserted by some that war *MAY* be carried on without violating at all the law of benevolence, that the highest good (things being as they are) in some cases requires it. They think it possible to carry on war without any more malice than the magistrate has who inflicts judicial punishment, or than the surgeon has who amputates a limb. Moral force alone, they say, is not sufficient for the maintenance of civil society. Neither is it *always* sufficient for the highest good of nations. We trust the distinguished author will favor us with his views at length on this point. This matter should be set in a very *full* and *clear* light. But here follows the chapter :—

“BENEVOLENCE TOWARD THE INJURIOUS.

The cases to be considered here are three :

I. Where injury is committed by an individual upon an individual.

II. Where injury is committed by an individual upon society.

III. Where injury is committed by a society upon a society.

I. Where an injury is committed by an individual upon an individual.

In this case the offender is guilty of wickedness, and of violation of our personal rights.

1. In so far as the action is *wicked*, it should excite our moral detestation, just as in the case in which wrong is done to any one else.

2. In so far as the wicked man is *unhappy*, he should excite our pity, and our active effort to benefit him.

3. As the cause of this unhappiness is *moral* wrong, it is our duty to reclaim him.

4. Inasmuch as the injury is done *to us*, it is our duty *to forgive* him. On this condition alone can we hope to be forgiven.

5. Yet more, inasmuch as the injury is done *to us*, it gives us an opportunity of exercising special and peculiar virtue. It is therefore our special duty, to overcome *it by good*, that is, the duty of reclaiming him from wrong, rests specially *upon us*; and it is to be fulfilled by manifesting towards him particular kindness, and the most cheerful willingness to serve him. “Be *not overcome* of evil, but *overcome evil* with good.” That is, it is *our* special duty by an exhibition of peculiar benevolence to reclaim the injurious person to virtue.

Such is plainly the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. It will require but a few words to show, that this is the course of conduct indicated by the conditions of our being.

1. I think that every one must acknowledge this to be the course pointed out by the *most exalted virtue*. Every man’s conscience testifies, that to reward evil with good is noble, while the opposite course is mean. There is nothing more strongly indicative of littleness of spirit, than revenge.

2. This mode of treating injuries has a manifest *tendency* to put an end to injury, and every form of ill will.

For, 1. No man can long continue to injure another, who requites injury with nothing but goodness.

2. It improves the heart of the offender, and thus not only puts an end to the injury at that particular time, but also greatly diminishes the probability of its recurrence at any subsequent time. Were this course universally pursued, there would be done on earth the least possible injury.

3. It affords an opportunity for the exercise of the most god-like virtue on the part of the offended.

In a word, the *tendency* of this mode of treating an injurious person is, to diminish indefinitely the liability to injury, and to render all parties both happier and better.

On the contrary, the tendency of retaliation is exactly the reverse. We should consider,

1. That the offender is a creature of God, and we are bound to treat him as God has commanded. Now no treatment which we have received from another, gives us, by the law of God, any right to treat him in any other manner than with kindness. That he has violated his duty towards us and towards God, affords no reason why we should be guilty of the same crimes.

2. The tendency of retaliation is, to increase, and foster, and multiply wrongs, absolutely without end. Such we see is its effect among savage nations.

3. Retaliation renders neither party better, but always renders both parties worse. The offended party who retaliates, does a mean action, when he might have done a noble one.

Such then is the Scriptural mode of adjusting individual differences.

II. When the *individual* has committed an injury against *society*.

Such is the case when an offender has violated a law of society, and comes under its condemnation. In what way and on what principles is society bound to treat him?

1. The crime being one, which, if permitted, would greatly injure if not destroy society, it is necessary that it be prevented. Society has therefore a right to take such measures as will insure its prevention. This prevention may always be secured by solitary confinement.

2. But this being done, society is under the same obligations to the offender, as the several individuals composing society, are under to him. Hence,

1. They are bound to seek his happiness by *reclaiming* him, that is, to direct all his treatment, while under their care, with distinct reference to his moral improvement. This is the law of benevolence, and it is obligatory no less on societies than on individuals. Every one must see, that the tendency of a system of prison discipline of this kind must be, to diminish crime ; while that of any other system must be, and always has been, to increase it.

Nor is this chimerical. The whole history of prisons has tended to establish precisely this result. Prisons which have been conducted on the principle of retaliation, have every where multiplied felons. While those which have been conducted on the principle of rendering a prison a school of moral reformation, have thus far succeeded, beyond even the anticipations of their friends. Such a prison is also the greatest terror to a wicked man ; and it ceases not to be so, until he becomes at least comparatively virtuous. The whole experience of John Howard is summed up by himself in a single sentence : “It is in vain to punish the wicked unless you seek to reclaim them.”

By what I have said above, I would not be understood to deny the right of society to punish *murder* by death. This right I think, however, is to be established, not by the principles of natural law, but by the command of God to Noah. The precept in this case seems to me to have been given to the whole human race, and to be still obligatory.

III. Where one *society* violates the rights of another *society*. The principles of the Gospel already explained apply equally to this as to the preceding cases.

1. The *individual* has, by the law of God, no right to return evil for evil, but is bound to conduct towards every other *individual*, of what nation soever, upon the principle of charity.

2. The individual has no right to authorize society to do any thing contrary to the law of God. That is to say, men connected in societies are under the same moral law as individuals. What is forbidden to the one, is forbidden also to the other.

3. Hence I think we must conclude, that an injury is to be treated in the same manner, that is, that we are under obligation

to forgive the offending party, and to strive to render him both better and happier.

4. Hence it would seem that all wars are contrary to the revealed will of God, and that the individual has no right to commit to society, nor society to commit to government, the power to declare war.

Such, I must confess, seems to me to be the will of our Creator, and hence that, to all arguments brought in favor of war, it would be a sufficient answer, that God has forbidden it, and that no consequences can possibly be conceived to arise from keeping his law, so terrible as those which must arise from violating it. God commands us to love every man, alien or citizen, Samaritan or Jew, as ourselves ; and neither the act of society nor of government can render it our duty to violate this command.

But let us look at the arguments offered in support of war.

The miseries of war are acknowledged. Its expense at last begins to be estimated. Its effects upon the physical, intellectual, and moral condition of a nation, are deplored. It is granted to be a most calamitous remedy for evils, and the most awful scourge that can be inflicted upon the human race. It will be granted, then, that the resort to it, if not necessary, must be intensely wicked ; and that if it be not in the highest degree useful, it ought to be universally abolished.

It is also granted, that the universal abolition of war would be one of the greatest blessings that could be conferred upon the human race. As to the *general principle* then, there is no dispute. The only question which arises is, whether it be not necessary for one nation to act upon the principle of offence and defence so long as other nations continue to do the same ?

I answer, *first*. It is granted that it would be better for man in general if wars were abolished, and all means both of offence and defence abandoned. Now, this seems to me to admit, that this is the law under which God has created man. But this being admitted, the question seems to be at an end ; for God never places men under circumstances in which it is either wise, or necessary, or innocent, to violate his laws. Is it for the advantage of him who lives among a community of thieves to steal ; or for one who lives among a community of liars to lie ? On the contrary, do not honesty and veracity, under these very circumstan-

ces, give him additional and peculiar advantages over his companions?

Secondly. Let us suppose a nation to abandon all means both of offence and of defence, to lay aside all power of inflicting injury, and to rely for self-preservation solely upon the justice of its own conduct, and the moral effect which such a course would produce upon the consciences of men. How would such a nation procure redress of grievances? and how would it be protected from foreign aggression?

1. *Of redress of grievances.* Under this head would be comprehended violation of treaties, spoliation of property, and ill-treatment of its citizens.

I reply, 1. The very fact that a nation relied solely upon the justice of its measures, and the benevolence of its conduct, would do more than any thing else to *prevent* the occurrence of injury. The moral sentiment of every human community, would rise in opposition to injury inflicted upon the just, the kind, and the merciful. Thus, by this course, the probabilities of aggression are rendered *as few* as the nature of man will permit.

2. But suppose injury to be done. I reply, the proper appeal for moral beings, upon moral questions, is not to physical force, but to the consciences of men. Let the wrong be set forth, but be set forth in the spirit of love; and in this manner, if in any, will the consciences of men be aroused to justice.

3. But suppose this method to fail. Why, then, let us suffer the injury. This is the preferable evil of the two. Because they have injured us a *little*, it does not follow that we should injure ourselves *much*. But it will be said, what is then to become of our national honor? I answer, first, if we have acted justly, we surely are not dishonored. The dishonor rests upon those who have done wickedly. I answer again, national honor is displayed in forbearance, in forgiveness, in requiting faithlessness with fidelity, and grievances with kindness and good will. These virtues are surely as delightful and as honorable in nations as in individuals.

But it may be asked, what is to prevent repeated and continued aggression? I answer, first, not instruments of destruction, but the moral principle which God has placed in the bosom of every man. I think that obedience to the law of God, on the part of the injured, is the surest preventive against the repeti-

tion of injury. I answer, secondly, suppose that acting in obedience to the law of benevolence will not prevent the repetition of injury, will acting upon the principle of retaliation prevent it? This is really the true question. The evil tempers of the human heart are allowed to exist, and we are inquiring in what manner shall we suffer the least injury from them; whether by obeying the law of benevolence or that of retaliation? It is not necessary, therefore, to show, that, by adopting the law of benevolence, we shall not *suffer at all*; but that, by adopting it, we shall suffer *less* than by the opposite course: and that a nation would actually thus suffer less upon the whole than by any other course, cannot, I think, be doubted by any one who will calmly reflect upon the subject.

II. How would such a nation be protected from external attack and entire subjugation? I answer, By adopting the law of benevolence, a nation would render such an event in the highest degree improbable. The causes of national war are, most commonly, the love of plunder and the love of glory. The first of these is rarely, if ever, sufficient to stimulate men to the ferocity necessary to war, unless when assisted by the second. And by adopting as the rule of our conduct the law of benevolence, all motive arising from the second cause is taken away. There is not a nation in Europe that could be led on to war against a harmless, just, forgiving, and defenceless people.

But suppose such a case really should occur, what are we then to do? I answer, suffer injury with forgiveness and love, looking up to God, who, in his holy habitation, is the Judge of the whole earth. And if it be said, we shall then all be subjected and enslaved, I answer again, have wars prevented men from being subjected and enslaved? Is there a nation on the continent of Europe that has not been overrun by foreign troops several times, even within the present century. And still more, is it not most commonly the case, that the very means by which we repel a despotism from abroad, only establishes over us a military despotism at home? Since, then, the principle of retaliation will not, with any certainty, save a country from conquest, the real question, as before, is, by obedience to which law will a nation be most likely to escape it, by the law of retaliation or by that of benevolence? It seems to me, that a man who will calmly reflect, can have but little doubt on this matter.

But I go still farther. The Scriptures teach us that God has created men, both as individuals and as societies, under the law of benevolence ; and that he intends this law to be obeyed. Societies have never yet thought of obeying it in their dealings with each other ; and statesmen would generally consider the allusion to it as puerile. But this alters not the law of God, nor the punishment which he inflicts upon nations for the violation of it. This punishment I suppose to be war. I believe aggression from a foreign nation, to be the intimation from God that we are disobeying the law of benevolence, and that this is his mode of teaching nations their duty, in this respect, to each other. So that aggression seems to me, to be in no manner a call to retaliation and injury, but rather a call to special kindness and good will. And still further, the requiting evil with good, tends just as strongly to the cessation of all injury in nations as in individuals. Let any man reflect upon the amount of pecuniary expenditure, and the awful waste of human life, which the wars of the last hundred years have occasioned, and then I will ask him whether it be not self-evident, that the one-hundredth part of this expense and suffering, if employed in the honest effort to render mankind wiser and better, would long before this time, have banished wars from the earth, and rendered the civilized world like the Garden of Eden.

If this be true, it will follow, that the cultivation of a military spirit, is the cultivation of a great curse to a community ; and that all means, both of offence and defence, are worse than useless, inasmuch as they aggravate the very source of the evil, the corrupt passions of the human heart, by the manner in which they ineffectually attempt to check the evil itself.

I am aware that all this may be *called* visionary, romantic, and chimerical. This, however, neither *makes* it so, nor *shows* it to be so. The time to *apply* these epithets will be, when the justness of their application has been proved. And if it be said, these principles may all be very true, but you can never induce nations to act upon them ; I answer this concession admits that such is the law of God. If this be the case, that nation will be the happiest and wisest, which is the first to obey it. And if it be said, it would be wisest and best to obey the law of benevolence, but men will never obey it ; I answer, here is manifestly the end of the argument. If we show men what is wisest and

best, and according to the will of their Creator, we can do no more. If they disobey it, this is a matter to be settled between them and their God. It remains, however, to be seen, whether God will or will not cause his laws to be obeyed; and whether omniscience and omnipotence have not the means of teaching his creatures submission to his will."

Intelligence.

PEACE SOCIETIES.—RESOLUTIONS, &c.

ENGLAND.—The Secretary of the British "*Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace*," has, since the publication of our last number, very kindly sent us the 52d and 53d numbers of the London "*Herald of Peace*," together with duplicates of the Society's numerous and very valuable Tracts. We return him and the Society many thanks for their favor.

We find in these numbers of the Herald, a variety of Extracts from the Reports of different Peace Societies. The sermon of the Rev. C. C. Vanarsdalen, pronounced in the North Church at New Haven, Connecticut, during the session of the Legislature, by appointment of the Connecticut Peace Society, is republished in the Herald, entire. Our impression, in looking at these numbers of the Herald, is, that the good cause is progressing in Great Britain. We trust the time will shortly come, when Great Britain shall be no less distinguished for the glories of peace than she has been for the (false) glories of war. From the Report of the Hibernian Society, extracts from which are published in the Herald, it appears that there are in England, at the present time, about twenty-seven Peace Societies.

CONNECTICUT PEACE SOCIETY.—The fourth Anniversary of this Society, was held at the Baptist Church in this city, on the 10th of May last. The annual discourse before the Society, was delivered by the Rev. R. H. Neale, Pastor of the Baptist Church, New Haven. It was listened to by a crowded audience, with very great interest. We understand it will soon be published. This Society has sent copies of the Advocate, which during the last year was published under its patronage, to all the members of the United States Congress, to the Judges of the United States Courts, and to several officers of the different Departments of the United States Government.

HIBERNIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF PERMANENT AND UNIVERSAL PEACE.—At a meeting of this Society, holden on the 16th of Dec. 1834, the following Resolutions were passed unanimously:—

"Moved by Henry Grattan Curran; seconded by Mr. Harvey—

That the Report now read be adopted as the Report of the Meeting:

Moved by Mr. Sherwood; seconded by Mr. Grace—

Resolved, That this Meeting adopts as a resolution, the opinion so ably expressed by the celebrated Erasmus, viz.—"If there is in the affairs of mortal men any one thing which it is proper uniformly to explode, which it is incumbent on every man by every lawful means to avoid, to deprecate, to oppose—that one thing is, doubtless, War. There is nothing more unnaturally wicked, more productive of misery, more extensively destructive,